

Report to Council



DATE: 13 May 2026
TO: Mayor and Councillors
FROM: Chief Executive

Submissions to the Draft Annual Plan 2026 27

1. Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to consider submission on the draft Annual Plan 2026 27
- 1.2. This issue arises from the requirements of ss 83(1)(d) and (e), and s 95(2) of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA).
- 1.3. Council seeks to meet its obligations under the Local Government Act 2002 and the achievement of the District Vision adopted by the Council in June 2025, which are set out in the Long-Term Plan 2025-2034.
- 1.4. This report concludes by recommending that Council hears the verbal submissions and reads the written submissions to the Draft Annual Plan 2026 27 and use these submissions to make decisions about the content of the Draft Annual Plan 2026 27 and direct the CE to make any necessary amendments, ready for the adoption of the final Annual Plan 2026 27.

2. Background

- 2.1. Council agreed to conduct public consultation under s 95(2) LGA by adopting the draft Annual Plan and Consultation Document at the Council meeting on 01 April 2026.
- 2.2. The public were asked to consider the following proposals:
 - 2.3. Remittance of rate penalties
 - 2.4. Changes to pool operating hours
 - 2.5. Changes to museum operating hours
 - 2.6. Changes to library operating hours
 - 2.7. Changes to isite operating hours
 - 2.8. Library reserves
 - 2.9. Heritage Park
- 2.3 Public consultation commenced on Friday 10 April 2026 at 9am and closed on Sunday, 10 May 2026 at 4pm (31 days).

3. Current Situation

- 3.1. Council received 81 submissions. There were some repeat submissions from a small number of submitters representing different organisations for each submission. Some submissions were about a specific topic and did not respond to the options the Council chose for consultation.
- 3.2. A summary of the submissions and staff comments is attached in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.3. The submissions are attached in **Appendix 2**.

4. Options

- 4.1. Option 1: Do not hear and consider submissions to the draft Annual Plan 2026 27
- 4.2. Option 2: Hearings.
 - 4.2.1. Hears and considers the verbal and written submissions.
 - 4.2.2. Deliberate and decide on submissions.
 - 4.2.3. Instruct the CE to make the necessary amendments to the Draft Annual Plan and present the Annual plan to the Council meeting on the 25 June 2026 for adoption.

5. Risk Analysis

- 5.1. Risk has been considered, and the following risks have been identified:
 - Compliance and regulatory risk – Delaying or not holding the hearing risks adopting the draft Annual Plan 2026 27 outside of the legislative timeframe. This can be mitigated by holding the hearing and making decisions to finalise the draft Annual Plan 2026 27
 - Reputational risk -- If the Council does not hold the hearing there is a risk of damage to its reputation as the public will perceive that Council does not take their views into account in making decisions. This can be mitigated by holding the hearing and elected members upholding s 82(e) LGA, receiving views with an open mind and given due consideration in making decisions.
 - Financial – Significant changes to the draft Annual Plan 2026 27 could result in an unbalanced budget.

6. Health and Safety

- 6.1. Health and Safety considerations have been reviewed, and no issues have been identified.

7. Significance and Engagement

- 7.1. The level of significance has been assessed as being high under Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.
- 7.2. Public consultation was undertaken under s 95(2) from Friday 10 April 2026 at 9am and closed on Sunday, 10 May 2026 at 4pm (31 days). This was advertised through public notices in local newspapers and through the Council's other communication channels.

8. Assessment of Options (including Financial Considerations)

- 8.1. Option 1: Council has an obligation to hear and consider submissions. To do nothing would breach Council's obligations under the LGA.
- 8.2. Option 2: Hearings are an important part of community consultation and engagement. Council needs to understand the community's view on the draft Annual Plan 2026 27.
- 8.3. There are no financial implications to carrying out a hearing.

9. Preferred Option(s) and Reasons

- 9.1. The preferred option is Option 2.
 - 9.1.1. Consider verbal and written submissions.
 - 9.1.2. Deliberate on submissions.
 - 9.1.3. Instruct the CE to make the necessary amendments to the Draft Annual Report 2026 27 and present the Annual Report 2026 27 to the Ordinary Council Meeting on 26 June 2026 for adoption.

10. Recommendation(s)

- 10.1. That Council receive the report.
- 10.2. That Council hears and considers the written and verbal submissions.
- 10.3. That Council deliberates on the submissions to the draft Annual Plan 2026 27.
- 10.4. That the CE be instructed to make the necessary amendments to the Draft Annual Plan 2026 27 and present the Annual Plan 2026 27 to the Ordinary Council Meeting on 25 June 2026 for adoption.

Barbara Phillips
Chief Executive

Appendix 1: Submission analysis

Appendix 2: Submissions